

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 29

By Black

A RESOLUTION to recognize, honor, and congratulate Judge Jane Wheatcraft upon receiving the 2007 Stellar Tribute Award from the Sumner County Foundation.

WHEREAS, this General Assembly is pleased to specially recognize and commend those individuals who have devoted their lives to community service and improving the lives of the good people of the State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Judge Jane Wheatcraft, a highly regarded former Sumner County Judge, is one such notable person who has provided tremendous leadership from the bench and has worked assiduously to improve the lives of the citizens of Sumner County and the great State of Tennessee; and

WHEREAS, Judge Wheatcraft has recently been awarded the 2007 Stellar Tribute Award from the Sumner County Foundation in recognition of her outstanding legislative, historical, and philanthropic contributions to the community; and

WHEREAS, an honor given annually by the Sumner Foundation, the Stellar Tribute Award recognizes a person in the Sumner Regional Health Systems (SRHS) service area who has made a significant contribution to his or her community by giving freely of his or her time, talents, and financial resources to make the SRHS region a better place to live; and

WHEREAS, Judge Wheatcraft, who had always wanted to pursue a law education, received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Political Science at the University of Delaware, in 1962; however, she postponed law school for family; and

WHEREAS, in 1973, she enrolled at the Nashville School of Law; while in school there she served as a law clerk in the Davidson County District Attorney's office and, consequently, developed an interest in the constitutional aspects of criminal law; and

WHEREAS, after graduating at the top of her class in 1977, Judge Jane Wheatcraft opened an office in Sumner County, and practiced law there for eight years; and

WHEREAS, in 1985, she was appointed the Division I General Sessions Judge for Sumner County and was subsequently elected twice to the position; and

WHEREAS, while presiding over the General Sessions Court, Judge Wheatcraft served as Secretary-Treasurer of the General Sessions Judges Conference and was the Conference's representative to the Tennessee Commission to Study the Future of Tennessee's Judicial System, as well as the Conference's appointee on the Court of the Judiciary; and

WHEREAS, in 1989, the Tennessee Coalition Against Domestic Violence presented Judge Wheatcraft with an award, now known as the Judge Jane Wheatcraft Award, for improving access to justice for victims of domestic violence after many domestic violence laws implemented in Sumner county under her leadership became state laws; this honor is bestowed upon a member of the judicial or law enforcement field for outstanding leadership in improving access to justice for victims of domestic and sexual violence through systems advocacy; and

WHEREAS, no stranger to accolades, Judge Wheatcraft has received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Coalition; the award emphasized her demonstration of remarkable courage, leadership, innovation, and advocacy in the fields of domestic and sexual violence; and

WHEREAS, in 1994, she ran unopposed for Criminal Court Judge in the Eighteenth Judicial District; she served with distinction in that court until taking a much deserved retirement twelve years later; and

WHEREAS, while serving as a Criminal Court Judge, Judge Wheatcraft's most notable and successful project was the implementation of the Sumner County Drug Court; this program takes nonviolent offenders who are in the criminal system for drug offenses only, and incorporates treatment, counseling, and active judicial involvement in an effort to break the cycle of addiction that brings many offenders through the county's criminal justice system; and

WHEREAS, committed to public service even in retirement, Judge Wheatcraft continues her community involvement, serving on the boards of the Volunteer State Community College Foundation, Hendersonville's Community Child Care Center, the Coalition against Domestic

Violence, and the American Red Cross; she is also a Rotarian and a member of the League of Women Voters; and

WHEREAS, Judge Wheatcraft also serves with distinction on the Tennessee Task Force Against Domestic Violence and the State of Tennessee Sex Offenders Review Board; and

WHEREAS, her many professional achievements aside, she enjoys her retirement in Hendersonville, and the love and companionship of her husband, Don Wheatcraft; together they are the proud parents of Allan and Cindy, and grandparents of Robert, Maddison, and Frederick; and

WHEREAS, Judge Jane Wheatcraft is an extremely giving person who often reaches out with compassion to people whom life has treated unkindly, and she epitomizes the ideal of the consummate professional, dedicated public servant, and reliable friend and neighbor; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly wishes to grasp this golden opportunity to recognize Judge Jane Wheatcraft for her honorable service to the good people of Tennessee and congratulate her upon receiving the 2007 Sumner County Foundation's Stellar Tribute Award; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FIFTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby honor and congratulate Judge Jane Wheatcraft upon receiving the 2007 Stellar Tribute Award presented by the Sumner County Foundation, recognize her for her meritorious service to the citizens of the State of Tennessee as a jurist and a citizen, and wish her every success in all future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.